

Message Text

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53/42

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1045

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O R R E C T E D COPY (DUE TO SEVERAL OMISSIONS THROUGHOUT
ENTIRE MESSAGE)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, US, GW, XT

SUBJECT: FRG MEDIA REACTION TO SECRETARY'S REMARKS
BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL WIVES

REF: (A) STATE 48943; (B) BONN 3881

SUMMARY: WEDNESDAY'S PAPERS ALL PROVIDE HEAVY COVERAGE
OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL WIVES,
ALMOST ALL ON FRONT PAGE AND SEVERAL AS LEAD
ARTICLE. MANY ARTICLES CITE AS LEITMOTIV STATEMENT
ATTRIBUTED TO SECRETARY THAT U.S. CURRENTLY HAS MORE
DIFFICULTIES DEALING WITH FRIENDS AND ALLIES THAN WITH
TRADITIONAL OPPONENTS. THERE IS GENERAL TENDENCY TO
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ASSUME THAT SECRETARY'S WRATH IS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT

FRANCE AND THAT TRANSATLANTIC STRUGGLE GOING ON BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND PARIS FOR THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE EC EIGHT". ARTICLES NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT FRG, AS CURRENT PRESIDENT OF EC, IS ALSO IN LINE OF FIRE. RELATIVELY LITTLE IS REPORTED ON OFFICIAL FRG REACTION; HOWEVER, SEVERAL ARTICLES DO POINT TO BONN'S OBVIOUS DESIRE TO AVOID ANY FURTHER ESCALATION OF TRANSATLANTIC CONTROVERSY. SOME PAPERS EXPRESS SKEPTICISM AT INADVERTENCY OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS BECOMING PUBLIC. DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT OF MARCH 12 WAS PICKED UP TOO LATE TO BE INCLUDED IN MOST PAPERS, ALTHOUGH BONN'S GENERAL ANZEIGER REFERS TO IT, NOTING THAT IT WAS OBVIOUSLY INTENDED TO SOFTEN THE EFFECT OF THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS ON THE PREVIOUS DAY. END SUMMARY.

1. "FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG" (FAZ) HAS FRONT PAGE ARTICLE ENTITLED "FEW GENUINELY LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENTS IN EUROPE". THE ARTICLE, BY FAZ'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT JAN REIFENBERG, SAYS THAT THE SECRETARY HAS CONTINUED, "IN THE SHARPEST FORM YET", HIS "CALCULATED ATTACK" AGAINST THE ALLEGED UNWILLINGNESS OF AMERICA'S EUROPEAN PARTNERS TO CONSULT ON QUESTIONS OF ENERGY AND OIL POLICY. REIFENBERG QUOTES THE SECRETARY AS HAVING SAID: "I WOULD SAY THAT THE BIGGEST PROBLEM AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY FACES IS NOT THE NORMALIZATION OF COMPETITION WITH ITS ENEMIES -- WE HAVE A GENERATION OF EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND, WITH ALL ITS UPS AND DOWNS WE WILL BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH IT -- BUT RATHER HOW WE CAN BRING OUR FRIENDS TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE LARGER COMMON INTERESTS THAN SIMPLE SELF ASSERTION AND THAT THE APPARENT VICTORY WHICH THEY ARE SEEKING, IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF PERMANENT STRIFE AND ENDLESS COMPETITION, WILL PROVE TO BE HOLLOW." REIFENBERG REFERS TO THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN EUROPE BEGINNING WITH AND CONSEQUENT UPON THE FIRST WORLD WAR AS EVIDENCE OF A DEEPLY SEATED DESIRE ON THE PART OF KISSINGER THE HISTORIAN FOR A RESTORATION OF "LEGITIMACY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY SENSE". THE ARTICLE POINTS OUT THAT, ALTHOUGH FRANCE IS THE MAIN

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OBJECT OF THE SECRETARY'S ANNOYANCE, THE FRG IS ALSO INVOLVED AS CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE EC. THE US-EC DISPUTE, REIFENBERG NOTES, CALLS INTO QUESTION A VISIT BY PRESIDENT NIXON TO EUROPE IN APRIL; HE NOTES THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS NOW BEEN OFFICIALLY INVITED BUT THAT THE WHITE HOUSE REPLIES TO QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT BY STATING THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NO OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS ABOUT A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. REIFENBERG POINTS TO

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE DOMESTIC SITUATION IN THE U.S., STATING THAT THE PRESIDENT COULD SCARCELY AFFORD TO RETURN FROM EUROPE WITH NOTHING MORE THAN "HOLLOW DECLARATIONS" AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE HOUSE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE IS EXPECTED TO PRODUCE A DECISION ON IMPEACHMENT.

2. THE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT OF "DIE WELT", HEINZ BARTH, CALLS THE SECRETARY'S "CUTTINGLY SHARP" TALK BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL WIVES "THE ABSOLUTE NADIR IN THE TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP SINCE THE FOUNDING OF NATO." QUOTING THE SECRETARY ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DIFFICULTIES THE U.S. HAS IN MAKING ITS FRIENDS UNDERSTAND OUR COMMON

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C O R R E C T E D COPY (DUE TO SEVERAL OMISSIONS THROUGHOUT
ENTIRE MESSAGE)

INTERESTS AND ON THE DANGERS OF COMPETITIVE THINKING, BARTH SAYS THAT THESE STATEMENTS, WHICH HE CALLS "DRASTIC" AND "AN EXPLOSION" WHEN MEASURED AGAINST "THE RULES OF DIPLOMATIC INTERCOURSE", ARE "OF COURSE" DIRECTED PRIMARILY AGAINST FRANCE AND AGAINST THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER WHO, IN A RECENT INTERVIEW WITH JAMES RESTON, EXPRESSED HIMSELF IN "NO LESS EXCITED TERMS". HOWEVER, BARTH CONCLUDES, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT THE "FIGHT FOR DOMINANCE OVER THE EUROPEAN PARTNERS, IN WHICH WASHINGTON AND PARIS HAVE BECOME INVOLVED, WILL ALSO HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND THE USA."

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3. IN SHORT SEPARATE ARTICLE DATED BONN, "DIE WELT" STATES THAT BRANDT ON TUESDAY CALLED EUROPEAN UNITY, THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, AND EAST-WEST DETENTE THE "DETERMINING GOALS" OF BONN'S FOREIGN POLICY. THE CHANCELLOR IS QUOTED AS HAVING TOLD THE SPD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP THAT THESE GOALS MUST NOT BE REGARDED AS ALTERNATIVES TO EACH OTHER BUT RATHER AS SUPPLEMENTING ONE ANOTHER. BRANDT IS FURTHER QUOTED AS HAVING SAID THAT "CONSIDERATIONS OF SECURITY AND OF THE ANCHORING OF OUR DETENTE POLICY ARGUE THAT EUROPEAN UNIFICATION CANNOT BE PURSUED IN CONFRONTATION BUT ONLY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE U.S."

4. "SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG" (SZ) AND BONN "GENERAL ANZEIGER" BOTH CARRY STORIES (IN LEAD POSITION ON FRONT PAGE OF SZ) BASED ON DPA REPORT WHOSE TEXT WAS GIVEN IN REFTEL (B). "GENERAL ANZEIGER" ALSO CARRIES STORY ON OFFICIAL REACTION IN BONN, STATING THAT "POLITICAL CIRCLES" HERE CONSIDER THAT THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS SHOOT JUST AS FAR BEYOND THE TARGET AS DO RECENT STATEMENTS MADE BY JOBERT CONCERNING THE EUROPEAN-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP. OFFICIAL BONN, ACCORDING TO THIS STORY, REGARDS THIS "ESCALATION OF PUBLIC POLEMICISM" AS "REGRETTABLE AND DANGEROUS". A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE FRG WISHES TO AVOID ANY STATEMENTS OF ITS OWN WHICH WOULD FURTHER HEAT UP THE DEBATE. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, OFFICIAL CIRCLES IN BONN VIEW WITH CONCERN THE FACT THAT THIS DETERIORATION IN THE EUROPEAN-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP IS OCCURRING AT THE SAME TIME AS A BRITISH DEMAND FOR FUNDAMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS TO REVIEW THE CONDITIONS OF BRITISH MEMBERSHIP IN THE EC.

5. EDITORIAL COMMENT IS MIXED, WITH A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF MOST WRITERS TO ASSIGN SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CURRENT PROBLEMS TO BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC.

(A) THE "FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU", NOTING THAT THE COLD WAR APPEARS TO HAVE RETURNED IN ANOTHER GUISE, SAYS THAT THE SECRETARY'S COMPLAINTS ABOUT A LACK OF CONSULTA-
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TION REVEAL "THE ARROGANCE OF POWER". "THESE COMPLAINTS MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN ONE CASE OR ANOTHER", THE WRITER SAYS, BUT ADDS THAT "IF THE FAILURE TO CONSULT WERE A PUNISHABLE OFFENCE, THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY DURING RECENT YEARS WOULD HAVE TO SPEND THE REST OF THEIR LIVES BEHIND BARS." THE ARTICLE NAMES THE US-USSR AGREEMENT ON AVOIDING NUCLEAR WAR AND THE RECENT WAR IN THE NEAR EAST AS THE MOST STRIKING EXAMPLES OF THIS. IT EXPRESSES THE VIEW THAT THE MORE VIGOROUSLY MR. KISSINGER WORKS OVER HIS ALLIES THE GREATER THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FRENCH WILL BE TO PERSUADE OTHER EUROPEANS THAT THE U.S. IS INTERESTED IN DOMINATION RATHER THAN EQUAL PARTNERSHIP. THE WRITER PICKS UP THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT THAT THE U.S. IS IN A FUNDAMENTALLY MORE FAVORABLE POSITION WITH REGARD TO ENERGY AND CITES THIS AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHY EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN INTERESTS CANNOT BE VIEWED AS IDENTICAL. THE WORLD IS CHANGING -- NOT LEAST AS A RESULT OF MR. KISSINGER'S OWN EFFORTS -- AND ONE CANNOT EXPECT THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE OR ITS MEMBERS TO REMAIN ENTIRELY UNAFFECTED. ADMITTEDLY, THE EDITORIAL SAYS, SECURITY IS AN AREA WHERE INTERESTS DO CONVERGE, DESPITE THE LOUD NOTES BEING STRUCK BY FRANCE WHICH CAN BE REGARDED AS MORE OR LESS "GALLIC CHATTER". IN ANY EVENT, THE TIME HAS COME ON BOTH SIDES TO CONSIDER WHERE COMMON INTERESTS CONTINUE TO EXIST AND WHERE THEY ARE A FACADE. "THE BROAD-SHOULDERED ALLIANCE OF 1949 HAS SHRUNK, BUT A NEW COMMUNITY OF INTERESTS WITH MORE MODEST PRETENSIONS COULD STILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE..." FOR THIS TO COME

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ABOUT EUROPE WOULD FIRST HAVE TO SETTLE ITS OWN AFFAIRS
AND THE OUTLOOK AT THE PRESENT TIME IS NOT BRIGHT.
PERHAPS, THE WRITER CONCLUDES, THIS DOES NOT
MAKE SECRETARY KISSINGER VERY SAD DESPITE HIS COMPLAINTS
ABOUT THE LACK OF A COMMON EUROPEAN VOICE.

(B) THE "MUENCHNER MERKUR" (PRO CSU) SAYS THAT EVEN IF
ONE CONSIDERS THAT THE SECRETARY MIGHT HAVE USED
STRONGER LANGUAGE THAN IS NORMAL IN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE,
ONE STILL HAS TO TAKE NOTE OF THE "ASTONISHING
DEPRECATORY LANGUAGE" WHICH HE USED WHEN SPEAKING
OF EUROPE. THE EDITORIAL THEN GOES ON TO ARGUE
THAT HE WAS ESSENTIALLY RIGHT IN HIS ESTIMATE. THE
REFERENCE TO 1914, THE PAPER SAYS, HAS TO BE UNDERSTOOD
AS REFERRING TO PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. AND, INDEED, A
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LOOK AT THE EUROPEAN SCENE DEMONSTRATES THAT THE
POLITICIANS HAVE CHOSEN THE MOMENT OF THEIR GREATEST

WEAKNESS AND VULNERABILITY, IN THE AREAS OF MILITARY SECURITY AND ENERGY, TO PARADE THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM THE USA. FRANCE IS OF COURSE THE CHIEF OFFENDER. IT IS A TRUISM THAT THERE CAN BE NO COMPLETE IDENTITY OF INTERESTS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE EC. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH MAKE THE CARDINAL ERROR OF CONCLUDING FROM THIS THAT EUROPE CAN ONLY ARISE IN OPPOSITION TO THE U.S. IF THE FRG DID NOT EXIST TO SERVE AS A COMFORTING MILITARY BUFFER ZONE FOR FRANCE, PARIS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SPEAK IN SUCH LIGHT-HEARTED TONES ABOUT THE U.S. MILITARY ROLE. IT IS TRUE THAT WASHINGTON STATIONS ITS SOLDIERS IN EUROPE "PRIMARILY IN ITS OWN INTEREST", BUT WHAT GUARANTEE IS THERE THAT THE NEXT U.S. PRESIDENT WILL NOT INTERPRET THE INTERESTS OF HIS COUNTRY DIFFERENTLY. THE FRG SHOULD BEWARE OF THE NAIVE BELIEF THAT IT HAS THE POSSIBILITY OF CHOICE BETWEEN A EUROPEAN AND AN ATLANTIC POLICY.

(C) THE "FRANKFURTER NEUE PRESSE" REFERS TO THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS AND STATEMENTS OF JOBERT AS "THE WORST DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO CONTINENTS SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR" AND TAKES THE SECRETARY TO TASK FOR HIS DEPRECATORY VIEW OF EUROPE'S POSITION IN THE WORLD -- A VIEW WHICH, THE EDITORIAL SAYS, IS NOT SHARED BY THE U.S. BUSINESS COMMUNITY. THE LATTER APPRECIATES EUROPE'S POTENTIAL AS A MARKET AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN ATTEMPTING TO DEAL WITH CHRONIC U.S. BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICITS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE ARTICLE NOTES, U.S. FOOD EXPORTS TO EUROPE HAVE INCREASED BY 42 PERCENT (COMPARED TO 26 PERCENT ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD) DESPITE THE EC'S PROTECTIONIST AGRICULTURAL POLICY. WITHIN FOUR YEARS THE U.S. INCREASED ITS INVESTMENTS IN EUROPE FROM 420 MILLION TO 3.3 BILLION DOLLARS. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT THESE TOO ARE MAGNITUDES WHICH SECRETARY KISSINGER SHOULD KEEP IN MIND -- "UNLESS THE NUMBER OF ATOMIC WARHEADS STORED IN EUROPE ARE FOR HIM THE ONLY GUARANTEE OF PARTNERSHIP."

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(D) THE COLOGNE "STADT ANZEIGER" REFERS TO A GAME OF "PING-PONG" WASHINGTON AND PARIS AND SAYS THAT JOBERT OBVIOUSLY GETS AN INTELLECTUAL PLEASURE OUT OF CROSSING SWORDS WITH HIS AMERICAN COUNTERPART. THE ONLY QUESTION IS WHO PROFITS BY THIS JOLLY TRANSATLANTIC GAME. "IT IS OBVIOUS THAT BOTH SIDES HAVE A LOT TO LEARN WHICH OUGHT OF ITS OWN NATURE TO BE CLEAR TO THEM."
HILLENBRAND

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